

**BIOLOGICAL CONTROL (MISCELLANEOUS)
AMENDMENT BILL**

Second reading.

The Hon. K.T. GRIFFIN (Attorney-General): I move:
That this Bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

This simple Bill accommodates changes that have transpired since the passage in 1986, of the Biological Control Acts of South Australia, the Commonwealth and other States.

As honourable members may be aware these Acts resulted from injunctions that for some time, restrained CSIRO from releasing agents for the biological control of Salvation Jane. Stated simply, the legislation provides that such an injunction cannot now apply where a biological control proposal has been tested publicly in accordance with prescribed procedures.

In basic terms the legislation also stipulates that any proposal to 'target' an organism or do certain other things requires the approval of the Australian Agricultural Council. That body, of course, currently bears the title Agriculture and Resource Management Council of Australia and New Zealand (ARMCANZ) and includes Ministers other than those responsible for primary industries.

The proposed amendments will reflect these developments and clear up any doubts that might otherwise emerge over the powers of ARMCANZ. In addition, it will be clear that the Minister for Primary Industries will continue to be responsible for biological control as a member of the expanded Council.

Similar amendments are underway in other jurisdictions and collectively are appropriate when it is considered that ARMCANZ may be asked to ratify the release of rabbit calicivirus disease.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 1 is formal.

Clause 2: Amendment of s. 3—Interpretation

Clause 3 alters the name of the Council to its current name and provides for another body if prescribed by regulation to be the Council.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 8—South Australian Biological Control Authority

Clause 3 ensures that it is the Minister for Primary Industries who is the Authority.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 9—Delegation

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 53—Service of documents on Authority

Clauses 4 and 5 alter the title of the Department to its current title.

The Hon. R.R. ROBERTS: I rise to indicate that the Opposition will be supporting this measure. I have had discussions with the Minister in another place. My colleague the Hon. Ralph Clarke has succinctly put on behalf of the Opposition most of the concerns that we had and, by and large, they were answered by the Minister himself. I was very interested to read the contribution made by the member for Custance (Mr Venning) who has had a long history with farming and is known as the 'farmer's friend' throughout the Mid North. He made a long and thoughtful contribution in respect of this matter, obviously showing his credentials for a future run as part of the second team as Minister for Primary Industries.

I understand that he was extremely disappointed. I know that in his contribution he has done some in-depth study of

the biological controls and continues to maintain his association with farmers. I was a little concerned when he revealed that the property owned by the Minister for Primary Industries was covered with Paterson's curse, but I do not think we need to worry about it too much because he disposed of that property last Friday, which is somewhat of a problem when in a previous life he was considered somewhat of an expert on the use of chemical pesticides. I do not think Mr Venning was being vindictive but was using this as an example of what can happen with some pest weeds and other vertebræ.

However, one issue that I raised with the Minister privately, as did my colleague, concerns the effect of the untimely release of the rabbit calicivirus from the experiment on Wardang Island and the effect it has had on rabbit processors and people in the shooting industry in South Australia. One of the questions my colleague in another place put to the Minister was whether the Government would assist those people who have been dispossessed of their incomes. Some have been sent to bankruptcy because of this and, because of the Government's involvement, the question put to the Minister was whether the South Australian Government would support these people all the way with their claims against the insurer who, like the rabbit calicivirus, slipped through a hole and tried to avoid their responsibilities to those who were suppose to be covered by insurance.

I was somewhat disappointed to find that the only response that the Minister for Primary Industries was prepared to give in respect of that matter was that the department will continue to monitor the situation. Whilst everybody in South Australia would applaud measures that would control the rabbits in South Australia, it is a matter of some concern that this experiment has gone so horribly wrong. I will be monitoring that matter and hope that in all the circumstances the Minister can assist those processors in their claims. The rest of the Bill basically talks about terminology and reflects the modern acronyms for boards and associations that are involved in these processes. The Opposition, having received the answers that it needed in another place, will be supporting the Bill and moving no amendments.

The Hon. CAROLINE SCHAEFER secured the adjournment of the debate.